

HOUSE BILL 2858
By DeBerry J

AN ACT to provide for the erection and maintenance of directional signs for the Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) on Interstate Highways 40 and 55 and U.S. Highway 51.

WHEREAS, although it serves a quarter of a million veterans and their families in a catchment area ranging across the entire Southeast region, including Fort Campbell, Kentucky, the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) at Memphis is the only VAMC or VA Clinic located in Tennessee that does not have adequate directional signage erected and maintained on the roads and highways in its vicinity; and

WHEREAS, the VAMC at Memphis provides 24-hour emergency services and is also an area spinal cord and prosthetics treatment center; and

WHEREAS, because of its central location, the Memphis VAMC serves a number of veterans in transit who need treatment while they are away from their home hospitals; and

WHEREAS, due to the large number of military personnel who are now returning home after serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and other war torn parts of the world, there is an even greater need for adequate directional signage for the VAMC at Memphis; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly should act expediently to rectify this inequity and provide assistance to our brave veterans who have so faithfully served their country in its time of greatest need; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the department of transportation is hereby directed to erect and maintain signs for the Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) at the following locations. In addition to directional language and symbols, such signs shall bear the words "VA Medical Center":

(1) Interstate Highway 40 at the Union Avenue exit, eastbound only;

- (2) Interstate Highway 40 at the Madison Avenue exit, westbound only;
- (3) U.S. Highway 51 at its intersection with Jefferson Avenue, both northbound and southbound; and
- (4) Interstate Highway 55 northbound at its intersection with Interstate Highways 240 and 40, such signage indicating that the driver should utilize Interstate Highway 40 eastbound and exit at Madison Avenue.

SECTION 2. The erection of such directional signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

SECTION 3. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.